



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

| APPLICATION NO.   | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|---|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/812,246  | 03/29/2004  | Les Hull             | MIT5039 USNP        | 2200             |
| 27777   | 7590        | 03/30/2006           | EXAMINER            |                  |
| PHILIP S. JOHNSON<br>JOHNSON & JOHNSON<br>ONE JOHNSON & JOHNSON PLAZA<br>NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ 08933-7003 |             |                      | FIDEI, DAVID        |                  |
|   |             |                      | ART UNIT            | PAPER NUMBER     |
|   |             |                      | 3728                |                  |

DATE MAILED: 03/30/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/812,246

Applicant(s)

HULL, LES

Examiner

David T. Fidei

Art Unit

3728

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 6-8 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 and 5 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 29 March 2004 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>3/29/04</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____.  |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Drawings***

1. The drawings are objected to because the reference numerals scratched out and others informally hand written. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

### ***Specification***

2. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: Figures 3-5 are grouped in the brief description rather than individually asserted .

Appropriate correction is required.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

Art Unit: 3728

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

5. Claims 1-3 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Alpern et al (Patent no. 5,356,006) in view of Bamberg et al (Patent no. 3,826,420) and Will (Patent no. 2,228,493). Alpern et al discloses a sterile package for surgical instruments comprising a foldable package in figure 8 having the elements recited in paragraph A except for end panels with tab panels having a tab member with a tab pocket in the base panel. Alpern et al employs front and rear panels with ends 83, 84 that connect to the end panels connected to the base 70.

Bamberg et al teaches that it is well known to those skilled in the paperboard container art to construct an equivalent bottom panel 14 with a pair of end panels 24, 28 with a tab panel connected to each end panel that is formed with tab members 60, 62, 64, 66. Tab pockets 68, 70, 72, 74 are located in the base 14 adjacent each end panel, see figure 1. To modify the foldable package of Alpern et al by constructing a pair of end panels each having a tab panel connected to each end panel that includes tab members received in tab pockets located in the base adjacent each end panel is fairly taught by the prior art and would not have involved an inventive step. Employing such a construction would have been an obvious expedient manner of connecting the tabs, in order to form an erected package.

Alpern et al additionally discloses an insert 15, 30 comprising foam for receiving surgical instruments. The difference between Alpern et al and the claimed invention in this regard is the formation of a central opening for receiving a surgical instrument and a pair of projections. Will discloses that it is long known to those skilled in the foam packaging art to construct openings 7

Art Unit: 3728

with projections 10 for engaging the articles and retaining the same in the foam member. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the foam members of Alpern et al by constructing openings including a pair of projections, in order to provide a more readily convenient, and secure, manner of holding the instruments without manipulating tabs to retain the instrument.

A sterile pouch 11 is disclosed by Alpern et al as a polyethylene bag. The manner in which the pouch is constructed, a top film sealed to a bottom film relates to a product by process limitation that is of no patentable moment. Even if weight is given to the manner by which the pouch is made, such a process of making bags is taken, as Official Notice, to be notoriously well known.

As to claim 2, the pouch contains the a surgical instrument in as much as is claimed.

As to claim 3, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to employ any surgical instrument desired, such as reamer, as a matter of design choice.

As to claim 5, foam made from polyethylene's are contemplated by Alpern et al col. 3, line 51.

#### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

6. Claim 4 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

7. Claims 6-8 are allowed.

#### **REPLY BY APPLICANT OR PATENT OWNER TO THIS OFFICE ACTION**

8. "In order to be entitled to reconsideration or further examination, the applicant or patent owner must reply to every ground of objection and rejection in this Office action. The reply must present arguments pointing out the specific distinctions believed to render the claims, including any newly presented claims, patentable over any applied references. The applicant's or patent

Art Unit: 3728

owner's reply must appear throughout to be a bona fide attempt to advance the application or the reexamination proceeding to final action. A general allegation that the claims define a patentable invention without specifically pointing out how the language of the claims patentably distinguishes them from the references does not comply with the requirements of this section. The reply must be reduced to writing (emphasis added)", see 37 CFR 1.111 (b) & (c), M.P.E.P. 714.02.

Pointing out specific distinctions means clearly indicating in the written response what features/elements or distinctions have been added to the claim/claims, where support is found in the specification for such recitations and how these features are not shown, taught, obvious or inherent in the prior art.

If no amendments are made to claims as applicant or patent owner believes the claims are patentable without further modification, the reply must distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the examiner's action and must respond to every ground of objection and rejection in the prior Office Action in the same vain as given above, 37 CFR 1.111 (b) & (c), M.P.E.P. 714.02.

The examiner also points out, due to the change in practice as affecting final rejections, older decisions on questions of prematurity of final rejection or admission of subsequent amendments do not necessarily reflect present practice. "Under present practice, second or any subsequent actions on the merits shall be final, except where the examiner introduces a new ground of rejection that is neither necessitated by applicant's amendment of the claims nor based on information submitted in an information disclosure statement filed during the period set forth in 37 CFR 1.97(c)" (emphasis mine), see MPEP 706.07(a).


### Conclusion

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David T. Fidei whose telephone number is (571) 272-4553. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mickey

Art Unit: 3728

Yu can be reached on (571) 272-4562. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



David T. Fidei  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3728

dtf  
March 28, 2006